

R E P O R T

Your United Way of Broome County investment at work

April, 2000

Crime Victims Assistance Center--a beacon of hope, lighting the way

Since its establishment in 1978 as the Rape and Abuse Crisis Center providing a 24-hour crisis line with four staff and 30 volunteers, the Crime Victims Assistance Center (or CVAC) has expanded to become a comprehensive victim's service agency with 18 staff and 30 volunteers today.

The organization's mission continues to be to foster the empowerment of the community through prevention and intervention education. The hope is that the restoration process will help clients make the journey from being a victim to becoming a survivor.

In addition to community initiatives, CVAC continues to provide comprehensive services to victims of crime. Volunteers continue to be vital members of the CVAC team. The diverse educational and professional backgrounds of CVAC staff and volunteers has been essential to the provision of immediate, compassionate, and accessible services to the Broome County community.

Lighting the way through education of children, teens

The Child Assault Prevention Project (CAP) reaches elementary school children, their teachers, and parents. CAP is a fun, interactive program which uses role plays and guided group discussion to reduce young people's vulnerability to assault by peers, strangers, and known adults. The



A Light in the Darkness, a Beacon of Hope, a Pathway to Justice . . .

children's program helps young people understand that they have rights, specifically the right to be safe, strong and free. Since January, the CAP program has reached about 500 to 600 children in five Broome County schools in four districts. The CAP program assistants are volunteers and interns that facilitate and role-play. They are tremendously talented people that are committed to the prevention of child assault.

The Youth Assault Prevention Project (YAP) focuses on junior and senior high school level students. The sessions for these teenagers are designed to address pertinent issues such as personal safety, dating and inter-personal relationships, and

self-esteem.

Lighting the way through volunteer training

The crisis line continues to be the foundation of the Crime Victims Assistance Center. Clients, medical personnel, law enforcement, and other service providers use the crisis line to access all CVAC services. Staff and trained volunteers provide callers with emergency crisis intervention, support counseling, information, and referrals. CVAC conducts a 30-hour training session, three times a year for individuals who are interested in providing volunteer services for the agency. Experienced staff train on aspects of victimization including child abuse, sexual assault, and family violence.

Upon completion of the training, participants are certified as New York State rape crisis counselors, which enables them to monitor the 24-hour crisis line and/or provide medical and legal accompaniment to victims in crisis.

National Victims Rights and Volunteer Week, April 9-16

While the staff of CVAC has expanded over the years, the volunteers and interns who are involved in the agency are the key to its success. Without their commitment the mission of the agency would be unfulfilled.

The most recent crisis line training class was held in February and March, with 11 new volunteers completing the program.

The role of a crisis line volunteer is to listen in a way that supports and validates the caller's feelings. It is critical that CVAC volunteers have the knowledge of options, alternatives, and community resources.

For more information about CVAC and how it can help educate others in the community, please call Lynne Giacobbe, Executive Director, or Faith Vavra, Education Coordinator, at 723-3200. Information about the Crime Victims Assistance Center can also be found on the Internet at www.tier.net/cvac.

Your contribution to United Way of Broome County helps the Crime Victims Assistance Center and 33 other agencies and programs offering services throughout Broome County. Since United Way keeps its costs low, more than 85 cents of every dollar donated goes directly to member agencies and activities.

